Mat-Su Monitor

March 2015 VOLUME 38 NUMBER 4

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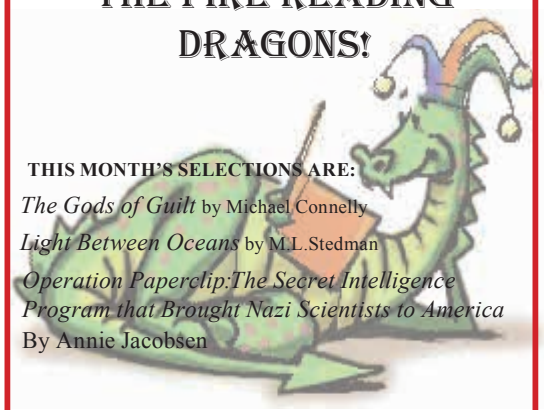


THIS MONTH'S SELECTIONS ARE:

The Gods of Guilt by Michael Connelly

Light Between Oceans by M.L.Stedman

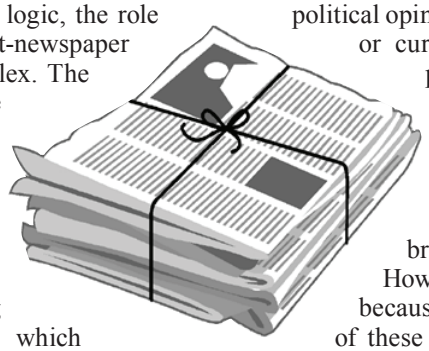
Operation Paperclip:The Secret Intelligence Program that Brought Nazi Scientists to America By Annie Jacobsen

Please ask a library staff member if you would like more information about joining or call us at 745-9740.

Your Paper, Your Purpose

By Ryan Foisy

Any given newspaper, journal, or magazine serves a specific audience, and with that audience a specific goal to achieve. As the audience transitions, so does the goal of the story being written; is the story written to educate? Entertain? Provide perspective? No matter how objective or unbiased a report may claim (or choose) to be, the archetype of the story will play out either successfully or unsuccessfully depending on whether it managed to attach itself to its own target audience.



Under this logic, the role of a student-newspaper can be complex. The audience would be the students (and perhaps, faculty) of the providing college, which certainly would remain a divided group, based in diverse race, gender, religion, political opinion, age, ethnicity, and interest. Under these criteria, it can be exceedingly difficult to provide news or information within a common context; the question of what any and every student wishes to hear covers a vast range.

This should never be a discouraging element for a student body based entity, particularly a news source. The reason for this is because that group, club, or even paper, exists to serve the student body. The relationship is pragmatic, and ever-changing depending on the needs for the school. Yet, this isn't a position of total subjectivity in terms of status and observation. A student body comprises an incredibly diverse population, which while being offset in opinion and direction, is collected in many activities and shared experience.

Within a paper, such as the Mat-Su Monitor, there is a definite criterion for the presentation of material. The pages may be lacking in national political opinion, global news, or current scandals in popular agendas, as could be found in many media agencies spanning broader audiences. However, this is not because the relevance of these issues is subject to debate. Quite simply, it is because a student paper is not as concerned with so many various agendas, which may only service very particular or individual concerns of specific persons in the body. A student-based operation functions on the conditions of an entire body, comprising all different opinions and directions.

The Mat-Su College exists as a very intricate window between the over-arching University of Alaska and the timid (but

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MIDNIGHT MASQUERADE !

Plans have been set for this year's Spring Formal. Titled "Midnight Masquerade" and based on the theme "Stars and Northern Lights," the ball is scheduled to be held in the lobby of the new Glenn Massay Theater on Friday, April 17, from 7 p.m. until Midnight.

Tickets may be purchased at the door for $15.00 per person and $20.00 per couple, or in advance for $10.00 per person and $15.00 per couple.

The dance is being planned and organized by the Mat-Su College Dance Club, with help from the Student Government.

Color themes for the event include blue, black, and silver, and masks are encouraged, although the organizing committee asks that only easily removable masks be worn.

Catered refreshments and a DJ are planned for the evening. Watch for information on where to buy advance tickets.

STUDENT SHOWCASE : DEADLINE APRIL 6, 2015

You can WIN an iPad Mini, a Kindle, or a 3-Credit Tuition Waiver for work you've already finished!

Before you get heavily too relaxed over Spring Break, reflect briefly on the year you've just completed. The Student Showcase Committee would like to remind you that the deadline for students to apply for the 2015 Student Showcase Conference is April 6, 2015. This deadline is just around the corner.

If you have completed a project for a college-level MSC course during the 2014 Spring, Summer, or Fall semesters or during this Spring 2015 semester, you are eligible. Your project must have received a grade of A and must be recommended for the Showcase by the instructor who gave the assignment.

Ask your teachers: They will be thrilled to recommend good work.

Complete and turn in an application form to the Student Showcase mailbox located in the Copy Center. This way, the committee can begin assessing your project now.

Application forms and policies/procedures can be found on the Student Showcase web site: http://matsu.alaska.edu/student-showcase

For additional information, please email us at showcase@matsu.alaska.edu

Make sure your work is published in the Mat-Su College Student Showcase Journal.

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The Mat-Su Monitor is the student newspaper of Matanuska-Susitna College.

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Aloha: hello & goodbye to the Pure Aloha Cafe

by Jacob Mann (editor)

The Pure Aloha Cafe will serve its last meal on June 30th, 2015. The contract will expire and they will not return to the Mat-Su College's kitchen. The cooks will wipe down the tables and scrub the dishes same as before. They will say hello or "aloha" to those coming in and say good bye or "aloha" when they go. After hours, they will clean up, pack up and turn out the lights. The dim cafeteria will be empty, waiting for the next owner to put a more institutionalized menu up.

With the dinner rush approaching, owner Renee Ciccarelli agreed to an interview about a recent survey evaluating the cafe.

"It was kind of last minute," Renee said. 40 people participated in the survey in the span of one day.

The average scores in various areas were:

Quality of service: 8

Food quality: 7

Food cost: 6

"Coffee drinking experience": 5

The survey also found that pizza was the top food participants wanted to see more of. According to the survey results, three participants ate at the Cafe daily and 12 ate there monthly.

Renee said that the survey did not paint an accurate picture of what the general consumers felt, claiming that there were plenty of customers who ate there 3 times a day. "We typically see 150 to 300 people here a day. Their voices were left out."

Over Christmas break, "Pure Aloha" changed its menu to satisfy customers. Under the direction of the Mat-Su College's Director, the new menu offered more "healthy food options" and lowered prices. Product pricing dropped 40% and with it store profit fell 20%. This new menu is what the survey was based on.

Lowered prices have been a steady desire since the Cafe first opened. When Pure Aloha first started, there were more "gourmet style" of products. The initial

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There's a New Modern Dance Class on Campus!

By Lori Leahy

I'm excited to tell you all about the new Modern Dance Class here on Campus. The class, taught by Megan Talley, is in its first semester and going strong. The class started its life in the art department at the college, but has since moved onto the stage of the new theater.

"There are a lot of trained and beautiful dancers coming out of universities..."

Talley moved here a year ago to work at Alaska Pacific University as the manager of Palmer's Spring Creek Farm. Talley, who grew up in Stillwater, Oklahoma and has lived in Boston and New York, is an experienced dancer who has been involved with dance since she was child. Although she says she wasn't just a dancer then; she also liked gymnastics and softball, and just being outdoors. She took some dance classes in high school that helped her to see dance more as an art form. She says she was having

a conversation with her father one day about being a dancer as a career option. And he said, "Sure, you could do that." So after high school she moved to Boston and started taking as many dance classes as she could. She didn't love Boston at that time of her life, but one teacher in particular, a man in his '70s, taught her about basic body movement and inspired her to keep going with her dream.

After a year in Boston, Talley moved back to Oklahoma and went to the University there, where she says there are some good instructors. There were also some modern dance performance programs where she gained experience performing with a troupe and traveled regionally. Talley says that was a lot of fun and every year the university brought in someone from an active dance company to teach the students a choreographed dance to perform. They'd also hold auditions to figure out who'd get to perform it. The company would work two weeks or so with the students and then let them rehearse for a few weeks by themselves before returning to refine the performance.

After graduating, Talley moved to New York. She was ready to leave Oklahoma and start something new. Having friends there made the transition easier. One of the teachers she'd studied with had a troupe there, so being familiar with his dance style, she was often asked to work with him. Talley says, "Each teacher has his own style and movement 'vocabulary,' so once you have learned it, you can jump in with them easily at any time". One of her first jobs was filling in with the troupe, "Pilobulus," a group that uses sheets and lighting to perform humorous dances. After that, she was involved for two years with a small trapeze company. They performed the story of Amelia Earhart. "It was low-flying trapeze; It was lots of fun, but also

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My time as a student ambassador

By Anastasia Sinyawski

When embarking on a new journey, it is always advisable to keep an open mind and a positive attitude. It can be said that the same rules apply to being a Mat-Su College Student Ambassador. Starting off as one of the new Student Ambassadors, I didn't really know what to expect. All I knew was that it was going to be a new experience that I would hopefully enjoy.

Since my first day, I have had the opportunity to meet great people and grow as an individual. Through different events and activities, I have grown close to the Mat-Su College community. Being a Student Ambassador has helped enrich my college experience into something better and exciting. Additionally, I have been able to become a person that is more open and outgoing.

I have learned to work with people who are different than me and share opposing viewpoints and opinions. As an Ambassador, I have had the opportunity to help and influence others. I would encourage other students to look into becoming a Student Ambassador. It's an experience you won't forget.

The Mat-Su Monitor Mission Statment

The Mat-Su Monitor is the student-driven newspaper based in the Mat-Su College.

The Mat-Su Monitor delivers news, announcements, advice, informative articles, creative contributions, and entertainment – all of which is designed by students in collaboration with staff, faculty, and the community.

The main objective of the Mat-Su Monitor is to serve as an outlet for students to: develop professional skills, build networks of contacts and referrals, share, art knowledge and experiences, and express thoughts and feelings - the student voice.

School events are regularly covered with accuracy; both upcoming and afterwards, informing those who may attend and reporting on what happened.

The content is centered on the Mat-Su College then explores beyond school grounds, investigating stories around the Matanuska-Susitna Valley and beyond – covering Alaska, covering its people.

The Gay-Straight Alliance

By Ryan Foisy

Amidst the various bulletin boards surrounding the halls of the Jalmar Kertulla Building, one particular brightly-colored specimen near the Atrium stands out amongst the others. Coated in rainbow colors, hearts, butterflies, and various quotes regarding acceptance, the former "Gay-Straight Alliance" (GSA) board stands out quite visibly amongst other decor in the school halls.

The now-defunct GSA was formerly an LBGTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) meeting place on the Mat-Su Campus. The meeting place served as a safe place for homosexual, transgender, and other non-binary students, for the sake of conversation, awareness, and potential event-planning. Due to a lack of organization and leadership, the club is disbanded this past semester, and the resounding quiet of the LGBTQ community on campus has been noticeable to several.

"I think many students don't realize the importance of a group like the GSA to not just the college community, but to our local LGBTQ community as well," says former student and student government member Michael DiBattista. "The Valley isn't the most accepting place for non-straight (or even particularly expressive) individuals."

For the culture of Mat-Su, which remains predominately white and "straight," LGBTQ, or "Queer" relations remain somewhat thin amongst students. The college stands as a typical "hetero-normative" environment; the example of a society designed specifically for men and women being together.

"Mat-Su College is extremely hetero-normative, and I would even venture so far as to say sociologically that hegemonic straight white masculinity is the dominant force at Mat-Su," continues DiBattista. "There is a lot of diversity, but there is also a definite monolithic overbearing.

While the college continues as a typical blend of various cultures, as different students of different backgrounds coincide, "queer" culture remains rather unattended to or noticed without popular outlets or awareness. The Gay-Straight Alliance focused its attention and activities primarily on discussion between students of different sexual or gender orientation, and also by activism of the community and the Student Government within the college.

Being a part of Alaska's LGBTQ community is never an easy, or welcome, place to find acceptance, Michael DiBattista reminds me. "I have to admit that I'm a bit boisterous and sassy, so I often would throw caution to the wind, but being in the Mat-Su Valley, even on a college campus, did make me think sometimes before expressing myself." The concept of being "out" (that is, open about sexual or gender orientation in the public) is a promising concept, but comes with its own consequences, and even potential threats. As a student government-backed group, the GSA hoped to provide a safe place for students to feel open; to be able to be "out," even in private. Now, students are left to decide between remaining "closeted" in their identity, or open to full and complete openness with the strange and unfamiliar public.

As threatening as a more "conservative" climate can appear, it certainly helps to know the understanding of many (if not most) within the student body.

"I found myself very able to be open with most students. Student sentiment (at least to me) seemed very laid back, and perhaps even embracing," DiBattista explains. "I did encounter funny looks when I colored my hair and odd questions at times from older students, but most people were kind

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Dance Class *continued from page 3*

really hard. I had massive forearms at that time," she says.

But fulltime dance jobs were few and far between. She went to many auditions, where there would be hundreds of dancers. "There are a lot of trained and beautiful dancers coming out of universities, so you end up working for more than one dance-company at a time". Talley says she did random jobs to make ends meet, one of which was at a farmer's market. This is what led to her interest in farming. Needing a break from dancing for awhile, she was also looking for something that would give her connection to where food comes from; to be more involved in the process of how it grows. This was important for Talley, having struggled with eating issues as a kid. "It was healing for me; I realized something had to give. Now I can be involved in the process of food, and be outdoors, and do something that is part of the community. But I'm an all-or-nothing kind of person."

At first Talley thought that teaching the dance class at the college would add a level of stress to her farming job, but has come to realize that it has done the complete opposite—it actually makes her realize how important dance is to her, and how much a part of her life. The twice weekly schedule is a nice addition to her life, and she's really enjoying the teaching. Talley says she just wants to make people feel comfortable. "Dancing never made me feel uncomfortable. I want people in the class to feel comfortable in the space that they are in, and not so serious about it. Leave that to the professional dancers; that's their job." Her main goal, she says, is to help people with

trying something new and stepping outside of their comfort zone. "Dance is awkward; I want to help make it less so. And help people see it as not just something someone else up on a stage is doing, that they never could—more something they can do with others, as part of a group."

Talley says she'd really like to keep teaching this class and at some point add another, more advanced class for those who want to keep going on with dance. She says doing a performance is not out of the question, if students are interested. "It will be fun to see what other classes pop up."She's excited about the possibilities the new theater offers and says, "It's a good place to grow the performing arts in the community. For some people it's a really good expression tool—acting, dancing, etc. There are a lot of opportunities that the space brings."

So if you love to dance, or you've ever wanted to learn to dance, give the class a try. You won't regret it, and I guarantee you'll get some great exercise.

Glenn Massay Theater: Lights, Cameras, Opportunity!

by Lori Leahy

February, 2015 — After months of waiting, The new Glenn Massay Theater is finally up and running full swing. The inaugural month has seen several performances:

•A concert by the Duhks, a folk fusion band

•"Shrek, the Musical," performed by Colony High School students

•The Mat-Su College Concert Band performance, a 70 piece band conducted by Gleo Huyck

•The first lecture in Northrim Bank's Lecture Series: Tim Bradner discussed the oil crisis, the past, present and what to expect in the future.

If you haven't had the opportunity to attend one of these events, here is the line-up for spring 2015, so far:

•March 20 & 21: The Equinox Women's Film Festival, including LunaFest: Featuring films by, for and about women.

•April 3: Singer-songwriter, Patty Griffin.

•April 18: Guitarist, singer Josh Ritter

•May 4: Singer, violinist, banjo player, Rhiannon Giddens of The Carolina Chocolate Drops

•June 5: Three time Grammy Award-winner and blues musician, Keb Mo and his Band.

As well as the events that are open to the public, the theater is also being used for classes, including several lectures. Currently, the Theater Building and Technical Production class is being taught in the venue by theater director, Matt Sale, as are a few of the Introduction to Theater classes, taught by Grant Olson. The Modern Dance class, taught by Megan Talley is also being held at the site [For more on this class, see "There's a New Modern Dance Class!" in this issue.]. Sale is hoping by fall that many more classes can be held in the spacious auditorium, as it offers many possibilities.

The Glenn Massay Theater is such a wonderful addition to our college, and the line-up of events for spring is exciting, so check out one of these great events, and support the local arts.

The Mat-Su Monitor Team

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Hello students!

By Everret F. N. Hamilton, A.A./ Student Government Council President

I have been asked more than once to write about "What Student Government does." I think the easiest way to answer that question would be with another question. What don't we do?

Your Student Government Council consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and three staff/faculty Advisors. After that we have, but are not limited to, five Senators and six Club Representatives.

Each individual brings a different perspective to the table. The President and Vice President are voted on every year by you, the student. Student Government holds elections every April in the Atrium. Any student that is enrolled in at least 6 credits on campus and meets all of the requirements written in our constitution can run for President or Vice President.

The staff/faculty Advisors currently consists of Craig Ballain, Jo Didiano, and Eric Blomskog. Craig and Jo both work in the library. Eric works in the facilities department. Each one of the Advisors brings wisdom and guidance to the council.

The Senators are elected by the council. It is required that any student that wish to become a senator for student government attend at least three consecutive meetings. After they reach the proper requirements their application is voted upon by the council. Once voted in they have a vote in all matters pertaining to Student Government.

Club representatives are the individuals that represent each official MSC club. For example Caleb Berry is the representative for the Chess Club. Every club representative has a vote in all matters pertaining to Student Government.

Student Government meets every Wednesday at 11:50-12:50 in FSM 205. In these meetings we go over topics like the spring dance, snack week, and the cable TV bill in the café. The funding for these events comes from your student activity fee. It is student government's job to find new and creative ways of giving back the student activity fee to the students.

Your Student Government has their hand in many other events. We often times do our best to collaborate with other departments to increase the success of events on campus. For example, many people enjoyed the spring carnival this year. The spring carnival is an event that the Student Ambassadors put on every year. This year Student Government, the Carbon Crew, and the Ambassadors all helped fund and organize the event. This event is designed to help students relieve some stress during midterms and to help foster relationships on campus.

If you see an event on campus whether that is a kiosk or a dart throw then chances are it is either a Student Ambassador event or a Student Government event. Both departments work very close together. Always feel free to enjoy the events that are put on at your campus. After all, these events are for you.

There may be a gym membership in the works for Mat-Su students ;)

Go Arctic Dragons!

University of Alaska Anchorage | Matanuska-Susitna College

http://matsu.alaska.edu/

Opportunities Start Here!

Get involved with YOUR paper!

The Mat-Su Monitor is open to students of all experience levels. A paper like ours always needs writers, artists, graphic designers, advertisement coordinators, photographers, and more (maybe you can contribute something we haven't even thought of)!

Meetings: Mondays and Thursdays, 12:00 to 12:50, in OLB 214 (upstairs in library).

Hello Mat-Su College Students!

Good day to you,

In 1988 I was born into a family of musicians. I had the fortunate advantage of moving to Alaska in 1990. One of the most wonderful parts of living in Alaska is our small knit community. One of the largest downsides is the lack of talking to people outside of your social circle. One of my all-time favorite questions to ask someone is if they like music.

I know that some of you are scratching your head and saying to yourself, "Isn't the answer to that yes? Who doesn't like music?"

But the truth is that some people actually say no to this question. This article is not for those people. I love music and the state of Alaska is rich with it. Below are dates for concerts from local musicians that are performing in YOUR wonderful state.

Please remember that there is more to life than T.V. and Books. You have to actually get out there and experience it and what better way to do that than to support your local musicians. You never know, you may see a classmate onstage

Have a great semester.

Go Arctic Dragons!

Everret F. N. Hamilton, A.A.

Student Government Council President

Shows:

March 27: Noise Brigade, The Harlequin State, Lamplighter, and Bad Friday. 7 PM at the Anchorage Community Works. 10 dollars at the door.

March 28: Shifter, City in Ashes, Sovereign Shadows, Young at Heart. 8 pm at Chilkoot Charlie's.

The Second King: part one of seven

By Brian Conaway

[Editor's note: in this issue we give you the first part of a seven part fantasy novel we hope to serialize in its entirety in future issues.]

Bennevon

237 B.W.C: ***Before War of Calamities***

Being the second sovereign of a kingdom just a century old since its ordination was, in a word, stressful. Taxing. Crime was increasing along the barely moss covered roads, intrigue brooded in the castles, and too often the authority of the king was questioned, ignored, and displaced.

Such was the Nation, Silvara, as Bennevon Antock, second of his Line, had received it. His father was a king to his last low breath and had in his will expressed his remorse for the kingdom he was leaving to his eldest son.

"*Silvara is not like unto my recollection of her. She is a wailing child, dear Benn. You were once not so different as she. I exhort thee therefore to wean her whilst upon thy brow my crown does rest. Thy Seat is not one of leisure, neither thy scepter a staff to lean thereupon. From thy Seat discipline thyself; with thy scepter discipline your child. If thou does this thou shalt rest peaceably, both now and in thy own last hour.*"

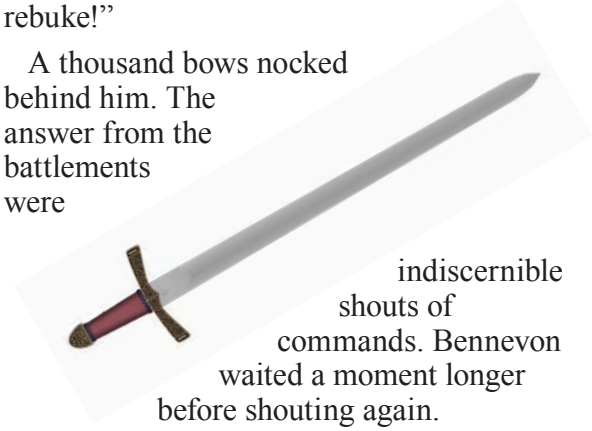
Three months had scarcely passed from the date of writing to Jahzeikas Antock's moment of death. That was four months past and Bennevon stood at the gates of a rebellious city, one who refused to admit him while he came in peace. Today an army was at his back and so he hoped that Orma would acknowledge him ere swords were drawn. *But back of them is a mountain.*

The renowned city had indeed become obstinate as the last king yielded more and more to the grave. They were even more so of late since Organthian traders from across the western sea had educated them about their new pantheon of demigods. Lord Aberosk had been eager to adopt the doctrines as it turned a finer profit while simultaneously justifying his disdain for the Antock heir.

Give them time and no doubt they will turn to sorcery. He will be the dragons' problem then. Stone may not burn, but Lord Aberosk certainly will.

Benn did not like his pessimism but he was not going to allow himself to believe that this situation was going to improve if it was not handled swiftly.

"Our bows bend!" the king shouted at the gathering men on the high stone walls, "receive your king or else receive his sharp rebuke!"



A thousand bows nocked behind him. The answer from the battlements were indiscernible shouts of commands. Bennevon waited a moment longer before shouting again.

"Very well! Let it be known then that the blood spilled in Orma is the blood of traitors!" *With hope they will be the only ones to perish.*

The command to fire was just behind his lips when the thick wooden doors suddenly stirred. Large chains were pulling them inward and gradually brought the courtyard and elevated plaza into view.

"Hold arrows!" he commanded with his mouth and a gesture of his fist. "Perhaps their evil is repented of."

Four horsemen were riding out, flying banners he deemed of friendly Households. *Baragae, Terena, Ballendiir, Caddenlot.*

"Do I speak true then? Or are ye the only ones found in Orma whose hearts still answer to their king?"

"Your Majesty, we answer the latter," the

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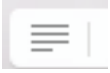
The Lazy College Student's Guide to Research, Part 2: Reader – Trimming the Fat

by the Lazy College Student

When you're reading an article, clarity is everything - especially if you're trying to save time. Maybe the text is too small or you just read faster with larger text. Maybe all the content on the web page is too distracting or perhaps you're easily tempted to click on those links on the sidebar, which are unrelated to your research. "Oh my! How did I go from Nikola Tesla's research proving alternating current is superior to direct current to cat's wearing hats? Oooh… Llamas making human noises. Wow, that was creepy actually. Crap! It's been 2 hours and I have 20 tabs open and zero research done!"

It can happen, my friends. I'm sure some of you have been there.

There's this concept called ***reader*** (or article view). When you click on your designated reader (for whatever Internet browser you use), all those pesky ads, links, and other distractions vanish. What's left is simply *text, glorious text with no clutter.* When reader is in use, you just see the article, so you can focus on what matters - the words, man. For **Mac** users, **Safari** has led the pack for a while in the reader department with its own built in extension whose icon is located on the top left corner of the address bar.



After clicking that icon, a page full of images and ads and distractions is rendered as text. Ahhh… *Crisp, clean words without clutter.* You can adjust the size of the text and even print this version of the article (That'll save you ink dude, but remember to adjust the size. You may even have to shrink the scale percentage from the print page. Oh! And don't forget to double-side print that sucker. Save those dolla' bills, buddy.)

PC users and those using **other web browsers**: don't fret, my pets! There's a reader extension for everybody! **Internet Explorer** (for those of you who still use that for some reason. Maybe you're old or somethin') has stepped up their game in their latest version and now offers a reader extension which you can access by simply clicking the reader icon on the right side of the address bar

or by pressing CTRL + SHIFT + R. Just note that this feature is only available in IE 11 in Windows 8's Metro mode.

Neither **Chrome** or **Firefox** have built-in extensions for article viewing BUT let's not forget the extensions, my friends. Both browsers offer free reader extensions. For **Chrome** users, **iReader** appears to be the most popular extension for article viewing. For **Firefox** users, **Reader** seems to be the most popular one. Both are free and both are simple to setup and use.

But wait! There's more! There are many readers out there but this one is a 2 for 1. It is mentioned last because it leads up to the last research tip, which I will cover next issue: offline articles. My personal favorite reader app, **Pocket** is your ticket to saving articles for later and all those wonderful reader functions mentioned above. Did I mention it's free? Ok, it's free.

Bottom Line: using a ***reader*** application will allow you to take out the text and leave the mess behind. Pick whatever works best for you and bask in the glory of article viewing freedom.

YOUR CLUB'S AD COULD BE HERE!

CONTACT THE MAT-SU MONITOR FOR MORE INFORMATION.

The Great Vast Forest Behind the College

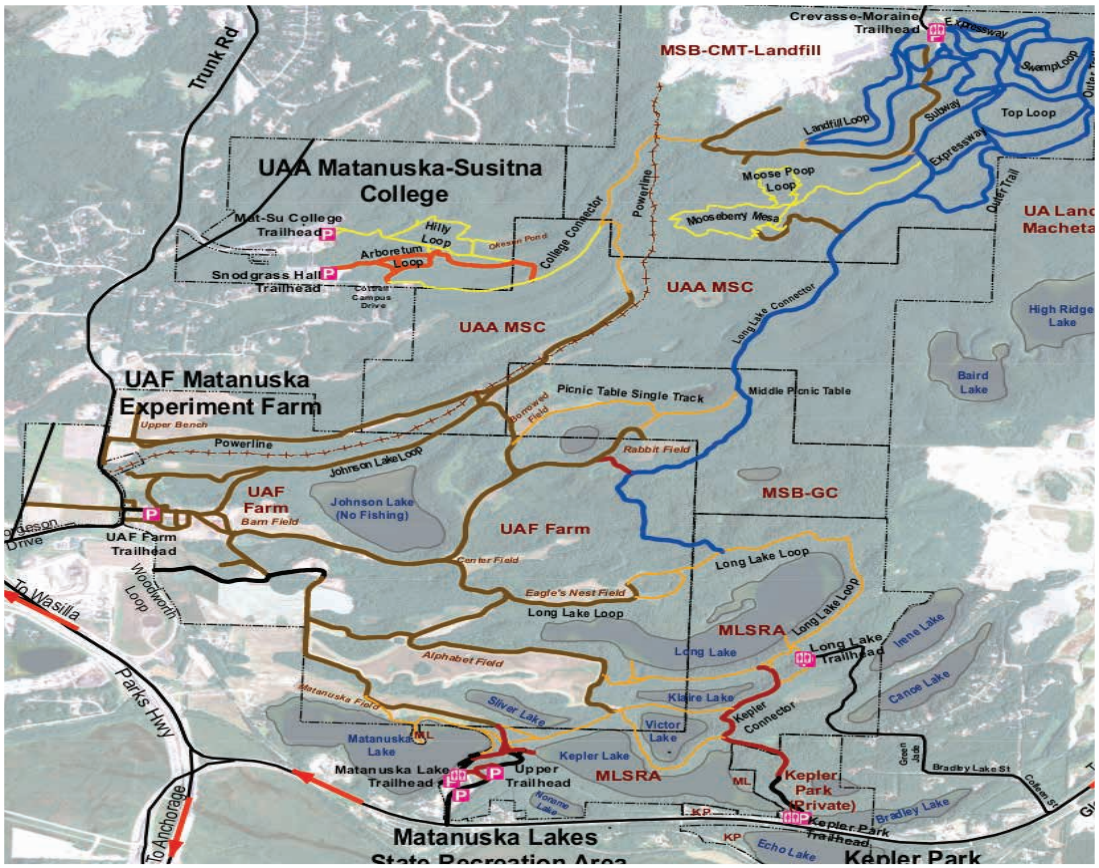
by Micah Muer

Did you know that Mat-Su College is surrounded by woods? You probably did, so long as you've been on campus while possessing the power of sight, the chief of our five outward wits (or "senses," as they are glibly called by today's youth). But did you know that the college owns a substantial portion of these woods (about 950 acres)? Or that the college has an elaborate system of trails on this property? Or that these trails connect to other trails, to provide a veritable railway of trails – the Matanuska Greenbelt – that extends for a total of 39 miles? I bet that you did not! The point of this article, then, is to get you up to speed on these trails.

You might begin your probing of our wilderness by way of one of two trailheads on campus. The first is located somewhere behind the new Glenn Massay Theater (look, we spelled it right!). This leads to what is known as the Hilly Loop, from which Okeson Pond is easily accessible. The second trailhead is located just outside the eastern exit of Snodgrass Hall, right near that small parking lot nobody wants to have to use. This trailhead leads to the Arboretum Loop (so named for the three acres of planted cold-weather pines in the vicinity).

While the loop appellation gives the impression that these two trails are self-contained, in truth they not only connect with one another but with other trails, some of which wind their way up to the maze-like Crevasse-Moraine trail system, and some of which work their way down to the UAF Experimental Farm and even the Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area. Taken all together, this is a pretty elaborate network of trails (again, 39 miles worth). So if you're out for a stroll between classes, be careful – one wrong turn and you might end up missing your next class entirely.

Fortunately, the Matanuska Greenbelt Trail Association (http://www.matanuska-greenbelt.org/) has done two things to aid the unwary. First, they've spent money and time to erect maps throughout the trail system. Take it from me, these are helpful. They also have a maps posted on their website. These are handy if you look at them before heading out, or if you have a better cell provider than I do.



My first time in these woods illustrates of the dangers of going in without a modicum of preparation. I began my jaunt after work one evening last May. For the first hour or so, my only thought was of how foolish I had been to overlook these trails. By the second hour I was a little bored and ready to turn around. The moose in the center of the trail cemented my decision. Somehow, though, I made a wrong turn on my way back. I found myself in an unfamiliar labyrinth of trails surrounding a desolate pond; to this day I am still not really sure where I was. But I wasn't worried. Though I am acutely aware of my athletic shortcomings, I like to think that as a walker I am equal even to famous ambulators such as Gandalf or, yes, Odin.

Without hesitation, then, I drove forward in the direction that seemed best. And again. And again. Time passed. The sky darkled. I was unnerved by the prospect of spending the night in the woods – and also by the slightly less grim prospect of getting back to my car before dark, but after the parking lot gates were closed. (In fact, I think this second scenario worried me most; sleeping in a hollow log is probably more comfortable than sleeping in a Ford Fiesta.)

With that in mind, I decided the best course of action would be to orient myself in what I guessed was the direction of the college, and quickly march straight that way, over and through any obstacles. Soon I found myself in thick brush through which I could move only slowly. I began to regret my decision -- all the more so when, probably hundreds of feet from the nearest trail, I came upon a sun-faded child's doll. I felt certain I was about to uncover a murder scene (don't call me morbid – it's Alaska.) Fortunately, I didn't see anything else, and with some more of my famous walking I worked my way back to a promising trail and thence my car.

So, to summarize: do not get lost. It will run counter to your enjoyment of the fine trail system our college abuts. Here are some more tips I learned on subsequent ventures:

- If a massive brown deer charges you, shout "Stay away from me!" They understand that command.
- During the summer months, bepestering mosquitoes make our portion of the Matanuska Greenbelt – wooded, dark, and wet – almost impassable. If you want to walk the trails, the dry, open spaces near the UAF Experimental Farm are preferred.
- I was initially much alarmed to see centaurs frequenting these trails, but apparently these are a common, harmless variety known locally as "horses."
- Sunscreen, sunscreen, ice cream.

Now that I have taught you about these trails and shared a bit of my sub-Cub Scout-grade woodcraft, I hope to see you out there.

Disclaimer: as faculty advisor to the Monitor, I have many unpleasant duties: listening to complaints, (trying) to sell ads, paying for treats for our meetings, waking up in time for our meetings, doing paperwork, and – to cut my list short – hurriedly writing stuff when we find out at the last minute that we need to fill a blank spot. The only upsides to doing this last task are that there's nobody who can force me to learn about the things I write about or to take this task seriously. So, to put it plainly: this article may have contained inaccuracies. It might have bored you. It might have confused you. It might have given you dangerous advice. If you object to anything in this article, your only recourse is to prevent such future articles by contributing your own content.

Second King *continued from page 6*

knight of Baragae responded, a youth no more than two decades in years. “Only, we are not the only loyal. There was unrest, and after that division when Lord Aberosk did not yield to your command of admittance. The Organthian traders made him their puppet by their counsels but we hastened to slay them when there was discussion behind closed doors about The Powers of the Colorless.

“In short, they were slain by us ere word reached the dragons who would have rained fire upon us all. We quickened to restore order to Your Majesty’s property, but only just managed to do so before your army assembled at our gates. We were agreed that this manner of meeting was of greater sufficiency than were the presented alternatives.”

Benn was thankful, these men were still loyal to their king.

“You are wise then, and for your devotion you will receive reward.”

“The favor of our king and his people is sufficient for House Baragae, Your Majesty.”

“Not for the king, it is not,” Benn insisted. “Not one worthy man should die without just restitution for the merit of his actions. There is no lord in Orma?”

“Sir Baraen of House Caddenlot dealt the stroke of death.”

“You are Sir Baraen?” Benn looked over at the man with a strong, chiseled jaw and full head of coal black hair. He shook his head.

“No, Your Majesty, he is my cousin. I am Sir Ramar Caddenlot.”

“Inform him then that I hereby appoint him Lordship of Orma and you as head of his guard. House Caddenlot has proven her worth, I would see her given proper due. I also hereby appoint the Head of House Baragae stewardship under the Caddenlots. I will write the decree upon the Seat when I return to Natill.”

“Thank you, Your Majesty,” Sir Ramar bowed, “I will inform him speedily.” The knight did as he promised even as the promise was made and he disappeared around a lane that led to Orma’s Keep on the Peak that hugged the mountainside.

Benn turned to the knight of Terena. “What of you? Shall I make you Chief Knight of Orma to lead the loyal to battle?”

“That is fair, Your Majesty. I will not object.”

Benn nodded curtly. *Of course you won’t. That’s why I trust you.*

“And what reward shall I appoint to the faithful Ballendiir?” Sir Mardin lifted his aged chin in grim acknowledgment. The Ballendiir’s had always been a loyal House, he felt it was fair that they decide their reward.

“Neither more nor less than what I deserve, Your Majesty.”

“You have served truly; I would not withhold treasure. Come, name it.”

“Your Majesty, I am old, unfit to serve you much longer with my bones. But not my sons. I should like to leave an inheritance for my second son. May I ask, then for the deed to Summershore?” Summershore, the island off the coast of the north kingdom, just south of the Ice Waters.

“It is a costly thing, I grant you, but for my years of service I do not regret inquiring for it.”

Benn waved it off casually. “The Deed is yours, it will make a good home and estate for a long trusted House deserving of it. Your son may have the Summerend Isle.”

“Thank you, Your Majesty.” Mardin bowed, “House Ballendiir is eternally grateful.”

Benn smiled kindly. *No less than I.*

END OF PART I

To find out what happens next, read the next issue of the MAT-SU MONITOR!

Your Paper, *continued from page 1*

accelerating) Mat-Su Valley community. With such a very specific and unique role, the student groups within the college encompass a population very much between worlds. The interests of the students vary increasingly, and conflicts can arise. As the Mat-Su Monitor attempts to serve multiple parties, it can’t help but sometimes be an instrument in serving only some

Without continual input or involvement from its correlating body, a student paper can suffer from a lack of opinion, artistic work, perspective, and influence. A paper offering a layman-approach to journalism, invariably open to any students with an interest, can nonetheless be subject to bias, improper-regulation, or even abuse, by the servicing group. If gone unchecked, a student paper can evolve into a monotone or error-ridden piece, with no direction or vision in the context of a student body.

The Mat-Su Monitor serves as a paper directed towards her college, and the community of her students. The articles selected, the interviews given, and the news reported, is presented with ostentation, that the reader at the college can be more involved with their school, their districts, and their greater Alaska University system. Because of the unique frame of reference, the two worlds students may find themselves a part of, the paper wishes to service the greater elements within both the Mat-Su Borough and the University of Alaska Anchorage. The news offered is quite specific, and very goal-oriented.

While the paper may not work to irrevocably weed out potential “unwanted” data, the Monitor does not service her student body without questioning the relevance of sources presented. With a narrower frame to showcase news, the stories, opinions, and art presented are elected to highlight the students, and their particular interests. Any discrimination offered on part of items directed to a paper such as the Monitor are not discouraged because their own relevancy is in question, but merely because the greater interests of the paper are based in the greater interests of the paper.

The greatest element of success for the Mat-Su Monitor is input from the student body. Without continuous, frequent, and varied usage by the available student body, any student-based operation is doomed to fail. Or, if not fail, then be subject to limited information and broken communication, breaking its own relevancy to the contributing body. As a paper, the students’ paper, the Mat-Su Monitor does not serve any other agenda other than the providence and regulation of her own audience, and to provide the opportune information, perspective, and artwork by and for her students.

YOUR STORY COULD BE HERE!

Write an interesting paper for a class? Experience something on campus that you want to share with others? Have a strong opinion about an issue? Just want to share a poem or short story? Now any student can submit content through the Monitor’s webpage! Just Search “Monitor” on the college website to find it.

Ask Sophia

Welcome to Ask Sophia, a new advice column that appears regularly in the Mat-Su Monitor. If you have a question you'd like to see answered submit it in the Ask Sophia box in the lobby of the FSM building.

Q. Dear Sophia,

How much wood could a woodchuck chuck, if a wood chuck could chuck wood?

A. Dear Chuck,

Barring any unforeseen circumstances, about 3 ¼ cords.

Q. Dear Sophia,

Why do middle aged women, who are overweight and aggressive, seem to think so highly of themselves think so highly of themselves?

A. Dear Wondering,

Experience.

Q. Dear Sophia,

Why is a raven like a writing desk?

A. Dear Reader,

As everyone knows… neither one is made of cheese.

Q. Dear Sophia,

I am having trouble meeting people here in Alaska. I don't meet people through work and I don't have a lot of hobbies that bring me into contact with others. I am also shy and tend not to make any sort of impression, good or bad. I don't want to meet somebody online because then I won't be able to see how hefty they are. Making sure they are not too big is extremely important to me. I feel I will have to resort to lies and slander in order to get somebody involved with me...It's a weird proposition. The worst part is, I am also almost 30 and will feel like I eill be a failure if I don't do it once before i am 30. So, my question to you, Sophia, is how do i get somebody to duel me? Should I falsely slander them?.

A. Dear Slanderer,

How 'bout joining a LARP group? I hear they have duels, or perhaps a magic gathering, *they* believe in dragons…

PUNS

I TRIED TO CATCH SOME FOG, I MIST.

THIS GIRL SAID SHE RECOGNIZED ME FROM THE VEGETARIAN CLUB, BUT I'D NEVER MET HERBIVORE.

I WONDERED WHY THE BASEBALL WAS GETTING BIGGER. THEN IT HIT ME!

IT'S A TECHY WORLD

G R T E I B K E G N H E B R E
C E E E I P Y N H O S M O I N
I R E P C K I T B C A O J P I
H T A K A H O R E I L T E P L
M S T W S P O O D T F H O E N
A I A I L A L O C O T E J R O
P N H R D E P L G M O R P P A
S P E B C I R S A E R B W C A
E V A W K C O H S W R O I P F
E N Q U A D C O R E E A K D A
D R E F F U B B I N N R I R X
P L A S M A U B I H T D T A P
I D U O L C W G M S U T I Z I
L C H I P E O L H E R N E I N
G I G S N L P A M T I B G W G

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Gay-Straight *continued from page 4*

to me when they addressed me directly."

While the GSA most certainly provided a safe climate within the Mat-Su college for students to express their voices and become involved within a growing social movement hell-bent on awareness and communal work, the question remains regarding the club's effects on the social-cultural understanding of LGBTQ issues in the school: Does the existence of such a culture bring together opposing or conflicting groups, or does it drive them further apart?

For the Gay-Straight Alliance, the mission of intent narrowed its focus on the connection between gay ("Queer") culture and the straight, or "hetero-normative," narrative surrounding the college. Yet, the curious dilemma of whether this group solved this situation of cultural separation remains. Do the straight and "gay" narratives of the school remains juxtaposed, or do they coincide successfully for the benefit of everyone?

"LGBTQ students to express themselves, rather than simply being more a part of the mix," Michael continues, addressing the question of Queer relations with a normative environment. "While it would be nice to integrate completely, it would take completely ignoring the differences that make us unique and individual – we need to embrace and respect difference, rather than ignore, or worse, demonize it."

Relations between LGBTQ students and other people within the community of the college remains completely pragmatic in terms of cultural expression; whether Queer identity can find basis is left in the hands of the student in question. It's suggestible that sexual and/or gender expression may be disposed under a hetero-normative identity, without comfort for young people to open their gender and/or sexual orientation within the college's parameters. However, there seems little reason to suspect that LGBTQ students might not be able to create new methods and outlets for their personal expression within the culture, with or without popular support of a group akin to the GSA. Perhaps, without an established manifold of private "Queer" expression in a specific group, a new generation of students may find a new dimension to bring the hetero-normative culture of Mat-Su College into a new age of understanding and acceptance.

The expression of Queer identity within the greater Mat-Su College can be vastly ignored in many aspects; however, it can also be greatly noticed. The question of how the college will react to new dilemma regarding sexual relationships, political debate, and religious influence in the theme of Queer discussion is left entirely to the student body, aware or not-aware of the standing LGBTQ presence on campus.

Get involved with YOUR paper!

The Mat-Su Monitor is open to students of all experience levels. A paper like ours always needs writers, artists, graphic designers, advertisement coordinators, photographers, and more (maybe you can contribute something we haven't even thought of)!

Meetings: Mondays and Thursdays, 12:00 to 12:50, in OLB 214 (upstairs in library).

Pure Aloha *continued from page 2*

theme for the dishes had an Asian and Hawaiian influence – hence the name.

Meals cost more but according to Renee a lot of customers enjoyed the home-made quality of cooking. Prices and trends in customer wishes drove prices down and over time less "homegrown" options were available to serve. "Homegrown kind of goes out the window when all people want is nachos and pizza," Renee said, adding that people miss those specialized dishes but "people couldn't afford it."

Renee stated that *Pure Aloha* had a lot more local crops and food options but "that's pricey." She said that *Pure Aloha* "proudly wears the Alaskan Grown Sticker." Any company that can meet the 20% sale requirement (selling AK Grown products) will get the official sticker. Fresh, Alaskan crops are difficult to utilize due to Alaska's infamous growing conditions and the high cost to sell ratio for smaller companies. Renee said that after October, it proves to be more difficult to offer AK Grown products. "We meet that quota with our potatoes, carrots, Barbeque sauces..." and so on.

Despite the high demand for high quality, homemade dishes, the prep time and costs tend to make customers impatient and hungry.

Towards the end of the interview, Renee's attention kept shifting towards the front counter. She noticed a customer who stood quietly looking at the menu. She stirred in her seat. She excused herself and approached the customer and asked the customer if he needed anything. She returned to her seat and apologized, then carried on with the interview.

Those who had influence over the direction of the cafe's future (with or without Pure Aloha) wanted the eating experience to be more "institutionalized." Cafeteria-style," Renee said. "They want us to be more like the Hospital. We get compared to the Hospital a lot." With her curly hair frayed from a long day of work her voice drops with her head. "Again, all people want, are cheeseburgers and French fries."

She folds her hand over her other and leans back up. Her smile returns. "Everything here is made from scratch, it's made with pure love." Renee avidly nods her head with each point she makes. "Our specials are when you get to see us shine."

"That's what Pure Aloha is all about."

"Now, we're just a cafe."

Renee said the reason Pure Aloha is shutting down is because her husband received a job offer that would eliminate 100% of his student debt. "A lot of people are disappointed to see us go." She said she doesn't want to leave the kitchen – cooking is her favorite job. "It has nothing to do with the faculty, the students, the staff. It's not about the money," Renee said. "It's something we have to do."

"It's my life stream. I love it but I gotta' do this for my family. That's what it's all about, ya know?"

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